

1 George St. E. M.
26 Nov. 1874

Dear Clark-

This is the 26 Nov &
Your last ltr is dated 8 Sep! ought
I not to be ashamed of myself? I am
sorry. I have a few excuses to offer
however & I hope you will admit of
their validity. In the first place I have
little or nothing to tell you, secondly
there is nothing very pleasant in
telling even one's friends of disappoint-
ments & moody forebodings; these feelings
are best locked up in our own bosoms.
Lastly I have lately been, if not
exactly ill, at all events so indisposed
that both mental & physical effort
becomes unendurable. For the last 3
weeks - part of which time I have
been absent from the office - I have
been a martyr to a complaint on
which I can at least enclose J.W.'s

sympathy - viz. neuralgia - toache theacher - so much for my
Excuses - I hope you will look over my sins as a correspondent give
me another chance -

I am in receipt of long kind letters from both Milbourn & you
ask you merely remember me to them with the feeling. And towards
you of old, but, for the reasons I mentioned last, my correspondence
has got into arrears, it will be late to night before I clear off
those who are entitled to priority.

Your last I decried lies before me - adopting a place my
old schoolmaster used to incultate. I will answer & recant
before attempting to give you any news!

You commence by hoping that my present unsatisfactory position
would lead to better things - I too indulged in that hope but up
to the present time, it has been a barren one - I am in statu
quo, despite strenuous efforts to alter the state of affairs. I dare
say I have applied for a score of situations since that time but
without success. Still I know that this will not last. Every week better
my chance. By becoming known & appreciated. Meanwhile, things
go quietly & signally pleasantly. My salary will be raised at 25ms
if I stop - I get over my work each week satisfaction. make the
most of my opportunities then slow but sure, mastering the
Victorian law - no easy task by the way? I think told you that my
principals are both young men - one of them - Eggleston - a Jamaican
& an A.T. - The business is almost entirely common law & equity - there are
many novel features I could dwell on, but I fear to weary you. However, I

may mention the fact that strikes ~~me~~
prominently & that is the carelessness
with which things are done here - Two
Circumstances account for this - the
principals leave a great portion of
their work - a whole branch, such as
common law - to the Clerk who has
charge of such branch - His Clerk
is one who has never passed any
examination holds no certificate,
but ^{or} as a general rule they will
have nothing to do with persons,
strictly speaking, qualified - but
the principal reason is, I think, that
this is only an example of the red-
~~dy~~ hot speed with which everything
is rushed thro' here - they never stop
to elaborate; as long as the work is
somehow done, the matter settled, the bill
paid & the deed registered within 15
mins after execution, they care little.
Elaboration (of which I have had painful
experience) have find no place in their
work - The mistakes I see almost daily
would make old Allport's hair stand
on end & my brother ~~to~~ rise out of his grave.

The language is vague bald & often inaccurate. The use is not always declared. the recitals incorrect & the operative words, parcels & conveyance always more or less incorrect. In three instances lately we have had to move the Court to get "Executors according to the tenor" appointed; & this in Wills prepared by Solicitors! Only to-day, we have an application for Probate refused by the Court on motion. because our Managing Clerk (a more than usually correct person) omitted in the preliminary advertisement to state that there was a codicil to the Will. I prepared the Brief & only made matters worse. because I used no draft & stated the matter correctly in the Brief (which was never looked at in the office after it leaves my hands) we; our Counsel, Purves, thus thought everything was as stated in the Brief & got a rap over the knuckles for wasting the Court's time. However no one was surprised. took it as a matter of course & the only difference is to the unfortunate client

-re the Quat. Firstly, I have to complain that I have not rec'd the Oct & Nov
nos. & the Nov no. was not sent to a lady whose address I gave to J.M. I rejoice
to hear from you that the last no was so highly thought of - not, of course, that
this surprised me. Well, since your last I have conferred with those friends
whose tastes are literary - very, very few in number, I'm sorry to say, -
& after revolving every scheme I can think of, have reluctantly come to the conclusion that
no efforts of mine would increase the ^{sale} numbers ~~to~~ to work a substantial benefit
for the Magazine. This is both a surprise & a disappointment to me. Of course we knew
all along that the "old school" would never take to it, but I certainly did think that
in this large city there would be plenty whose sympathies it would enlist. Now I
think differently. Although there are many men who are identified with literature
still they are not to be got hold of for this purpose. This is such a curious place.
The feverish "forcing-house" element pervades all. The Universities are only for - with
few exceptions - for "exams"; another large section depend up literature for their bread,
even those who are alothetic from inclination are so rushed & bothered that they
can only give sympathetically. Remember, I only write thus for after careful cogitation, but
I dare say you have a pretty correct knowledge of the curious composite state of
society here. Down to the truth of my remarks. As for the "great mass" they are worse
than in Tas. With perhaps a dozen exceptions the number of my leading friends are
from the fatherland; with the ~~and~~ others, this & other topics would be voted a bore or
worse. Still I hope that your somewhat gloomy forebodings with regard to the Magazine
are unfounded & that it may still, for some time at all events, lead the Van in its
career of merit. Needless to say I have done all words could do, to forward, at least, its perusal.

Many hearty thanks and for your speech. I read it with great pleasure not only
for its intrinsic merits, but for the bitter-sweet memories that it brought of the scene &
the emotions, thoughts, & doings that those two nights comprised up. Ah! that it were I miss
perhaps most keenly the friends I have left behind - nothing like that presents itself here.
As to other matters -

My own life here I regard as a self imposed
Exile - Believe me, it has done & is doing me
good & when the term of my probation ends
I confidently hope it will find me better housed.
Let me give you a sketch of our - or rather my
daily life here - say, tomorrow.

We rise at 7.30. have the daily indispensable
shower bath - for it is getting very sulky.
Breakfast at 8 - down to office thro the Fitzroy
Gardens - which are in beautiful bloom now -
down Bourke Stth & peg away at Routine till
12. or 12.30 - Then lunch with sundry friend
at one of the Cafes - The Post Peanical smoke
& stroll, either in the Station, the Arcade or
one of the quieter streets - back to office -
peg away till 4.30 (never later) & then a
walk home, generally solus, along the Banks
of the Yarra (of which & other places a
fuller description on request) & Botanical
Gardens & - some "home" - read or write till
6.45 - when we have dinner - After this another
Smoke - a stroll in the Gardens - or Fitzroy,
Richmond or Collingwood - a glass of beer
perhaps - always meet some Tasman! - home
early - about 9 - read or write till about
Midnight & then - Morphous - This quiet life
has its natural worth - I am better, healthier
& on the whole, happier, than I was in N. Town.
Sometimes of course this naturally varies - We
may have company, or spend the evening elsewhere,
but save Saturdays & Sundays, the picture is pretty true.

I am getting on well with my law
General Studies - have mastered Conveyancing
& the Transfer of Land Statute (RPA).
General Conveyancing, Probate, Ecclesiastical
Agency work - County Court law & Common
Law, I commence next week - Next week
too (tell Lucy this) I commence shorthand
& speak with Fred Edwards - I have almost
made up my mind to go in for the Feb'y
Matriculation. Carlyle & Emerson form
my general reading - Poetry I have done
little at - in fact you can well guess
I have little time for it - Other parts of my
spare time are taken up with preparing
my sister's M.B. for the press &c. - Tell William
she desires to be remembered to him - with
kindness - Has Tale & Poem coming out
next month in A. Journal & copies of which
I will send him - Altogether, I am trying
hard to lead, in any or on humble way,
"the gentle life" & hope to do something yet.

So many thoughts & ideas crowd
upon me as I write that with my limited
time I cannot help omitting many things
that I wish to tell you. However I must not
forget to ask you to keep me well acquainted
with the Friar's doings - especially your own legal

Studied - to know generally how the
old place is getting on - &c

The subject of Religion I have abandoned
- deferred for the present - but I thank
you warmly for the kind caution you
give me, the truth of which I admit.
Still, I must confess, I am "a doubter".

I wrote a long letter to the Fred (C)
which he has not answered yet - Please
remember me kindly to him, his brother
Halter - Should you see them - How is
Stops - the same tinterabulatory cuss?
To naivn too I should like to be rememb.

Oh, before I forget it, will you & the
others send me at intervals a newspaper
if not too much trouble. Also let me
know the amount of my indebtedness
to the Dead.

This is an unsatisfactory, chaotic
affair letter but I cannot better it, so I
had better conclude with a hope that
you will repay good for evil in the way of
correspondence. Still keep a nook in
your affections for
Your faithful friend
W. J. Hill